

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 01448 01 OF 02 191705Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7075
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 1448

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

EXDIS - DEPT FOR EUR ONLY

E O 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)
SUBJ: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: PROPOSED SCHEDULE

REF: STATE 147755

1. THIS MESSAGE OUTLINES SUGGESTED MODALITIES FOR THE TOWN MEETING.

2. MEDIA IMPACT: AN AMERICAN-STYLE TOWN MEETING IS SURE TO PIQUE THE CURIOSITY OF BERLINERS AND OTHER GERMANS. WE PREDICT INTENSE MEDIA INTEREST. ALSO, SINCE RECEPTION OF WESTERN TELEVISION BROADCASTING IS EXCELLENT CITY-WIDE, MANY EAST BERLINERS AND SURBURBAN GDR RESIDENTS WILL BE IN THE "EXTENDED" AUDIENCE. THE PRESIDENT'S ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON EAST-WEST MATTERS LARGE AND SMALL WILL HAVE PARTICULAR IMPACT AND BE EVALUATED CAREFULLY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE WALL.

3. ADUIENCE SELECTION:

IN THE INTERESTS OF AVOIDING ANY APPEARANCE THAT THE U.S. IS "PACKING" THE AUDIENCE, WE SUGGEST LETTING THE BERLINERS CHOOSE THE PARTICIPANTS. EACT OF THE TWELVE DISTRICTS OR BOROUGHES IN THE WESTERN SECTORS HAS SOME OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF A SEPARATE CITY --
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A MAYOR, COUNCIL, CITY HALL, SISTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH FOREIGN CITIES, ETC. TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION, THE CHOICE OF PARTICIPANTS COULD BE DIVIDED AMONG THE TWELVE BOROUGH ADMINISTRATIONS. EACH WOULD BE ASKED TO NOMINATE SOME 60 TO 70 PERSONS. AS WITH THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE AIRLIFT MEMORIAL, THE SLECTION WOULD BE CROSS-SECTIONED. THEY WOULD COME FROM LOCAL COUNCILS, TRADE UNIONS, CHURCHES, BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL GROUPS AND

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS (YOUTH, SPORTS, DISCUSSION CLUBS, ETC.) INTO WHICH GERMAN SOCIETY IS ORDERED.

A SECURITY SCREENING WOULD WEED OUT ANY KNOWN RADICAL ACTIVISTS AMONG THE NOMINEES, ALTHOUGH THE VIEWS AND INCLINATIONS OF MOST OF THE PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE UNKNOWN. THE SENAT IS ALSO CONSIDERING INCLUDING AS A BLOC THE 500 BERLIN PARTICIPANTS IN FRIENDSHIP FORCE; THEY, TOO, COME FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE.

4. AUDIENCE AND PRESS ARRIVAL:

WE WOULD PLAN ON THE AUDIENCE'S BEING IN PLACE AT LEAST A HALF HOUR BEFORE THE PRESIDENT'S ENTRANCE. SOME OF THE 1200 SEATS WOULD BE RESERVED AS A SPECIAL SECTION FROM A PRESS POOL: WE WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO TAKE UP AS MUCH AS ONE THIRD OF THE AVAILABLE PLACES BY THE PRESS ALONE WHICH WOULD HAPPEN IF ALL THE JOURNALISTS WERE INCLUDED. THE POOL JOURNALISTS WOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING, BUT WOULD HAVE A CHANCE TO WITNESS AND RECORD THE EVENT ON THE SPOT. GERMAN AND FOREIGN VIP SPECTATORS MIGHT BE GIVEN A LIMITED NUMBER OF SEATS ON STAGE OR IN THE MAIN AUDITORIUM. TV IS AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE IN THE BUILDING.

5. QUESTION SELECTION:

OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO HAVE THE QUESTIONS THAT COME TO THE PRESIDENT A REPRESENTATIVE RANGE OF QUESTIONS (EASY AND HARD, FRIENDLY OR TOUGHLY POINTED) WHILE AVOIDING OBSCENITIES, SILLINESS, OR MINUTIAE. WE ALSO BELIEVE AN ATMOSPHERE OF OPENNESS IS NECESSARY TO MAKE THIS A REAL TOWN MEETING.
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6. ON THE ONE HAND, WE COULD HAVE A CLASSICAL APPROACH WHERE HANDS ARE RECOGNIZED AND THE QUESTION, GOOD OR BAD, IS REGISTERED. THIS HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF TOTAL SPONTANEITY IN THE AMERICAN TOWN MEETING TRADITION. THE DISADVANTAGES ARE THE CHANCE OF INSULTING, OBSCENE, OR OTHERWISE INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS BEING ASKED, AND THE PENCHANT OF GERMANS TO MAKE THEIR QUESTIONS LONG-WINDED OR SIMPLY TO TURN THEM INTO SPEECHES.

7. ON THE OTHER HAND, ONE COULD HAVE AN IMPARTIAL INDIVIDUAL OR PANEL PRE-SELECT QUESTIONS BEFORE THE PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL, AND THEN PRESENT THEM SEQUENTIALLY. THIS WOULD PROBABLY WEED OUT INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS, BUT - EVEN ASSUMING A BLUE-RIBBON SELECTION PROCESS (A JOURNALIST PANEL AKIN TO THOSE POSING QUESTIONS IN PAST US PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS COMES TO MIND)-- WE WOULD LOSE ON SPONTANEITY AND COULD BE CHARGED WITH RIGGING THE MEETING. NEVERTHELESS, THIS IS AN APPROACH THAT WOULD PROBABLY BE UNDERSTOOD BY MOST GERMANS AS A PRACTICAL COMPROMISE.

8. AFTER DISCUSSING THESE POSSIBILITIES WITH THE BERLIN SENAT AND MAYOR STOBBE, WE BELIEVE A THIRD VARIANT IS POSSIBLE WHICH WOULD BALANCE BOTH QUESTION-SELECTION AND MEETING SPONTANEITY.

AFTER THE AUDIENCE HAS ARRIVED BUT PRIOR TO THE PRESIDENT'S APPEARANCE, A MEETING MODERATOR (AKIN TO A MASTER OF CEREMONIES, BUT WITHOUT CONNOTATIONS OF IMPOSING HIS OWN PERSONALITY) WOULD EXPLAIN QUESTION MODALITIES TO THE AUDIENCE. EACH MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE WOULD BE HANDED A PAD OF TWO SMALL SHEETS OF PAPER WITH A CARBON IN BETWEEN AS HE OR SHE ARRIVED, AND THE MODERATOR WOULD EXPLAIN THAT THOSE WHO WISH TO SUBMIT A QUESTION SHOULD WRITE DOWN THEIR NAME, ADDRESS, AND QUESTION, SUBMITTING ONE COPY TO ATTENDANTS AND KEEPING THE OTHER. IN THIS WAY, PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO COMPOSE THEIR THOUGHTS AND BE AS BRIEF AS POSSIBLE. IN EXPLAINING THIS PROCESS, THE MODERATOR WOULD SAY THAT QUESTIONS SHOULD EXCLUDE THE SILLY, INSULTING, OR TRIVIAL, AS WELL AS MATTERS THAT ARE SO SPECIALIZED OR THEOLOGICAL AS TO

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 1448

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BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR A BERLIN AND GLOBAL AUDIENCE. HE WOULD MAKE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT SERIOUS QUESTIONS, WHETHER FRIENDLY OR CRITICAL, ARE WELCOME. QUESTIONS WOULD THEN BE COLLECTED PRIOR TO THE PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL.

9. THE PRESIDENT WOULD THEN ARRIVE, BE INTRODUCED BY MAYOR STOBBE, AND WOULD SPEAK FOR FIVE TO EIGHT MINUTES PER STATE 147755.

10. FOLLOWING THIS, THE MODERATOR WOULD CHOOSE QUESTIONS IN A RANDOM MANNER FROM A TRAY, BOWL OR BASKET, OR A REVOLVING DRUM (WE TEND TO FAVOR TRAY OR BOWL) AND WOULD SCAN THEM FOR CONFORMITY WITH THE GROUND RULES EARLIER LAID OUT. HE WOULD THEN READ THE NAME AND ADDRESS ALOUD AND ASK THE PARTICIPANT TO STAND. A MIKE-BEARER WOULD GO TO THE SPOT AND TAKE THE QUESTION LIVE, HOPEFULLY ALONG THE SAME LINES AS EARLIER WRITTEN DOWN. THE MODERATOR WOULD

TRANSLATE THE QUESTION TO THE PRESIDENT; THE INTERPRETER COULD TRANSLATE THE PRESIDENT'S ANSWER.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE INTERPRETER COULD TRANSLATE THE QUESTIONS FOR THE PRESIDENT. WE MUCH PREFER HAVING THE MODERATOR DO SO FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON. THE MODERATOR IS VERSED IN BERLIN QUESTIONS. HE KNOWS WHAT KIND OF DETAIL WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR A VISITOR. THEREFORE, HE CAN TRANSLATE SLOWLY, PLACE EMPHASIS ON KEY WORDS, OR
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EVEN REPEAT IF NEED BE. AN INTERPRETER, WHETHER FROM BONN OR WASHINGTON, NOT FAMILIAR WITH BERLIN PROBLEMS ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS, WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE ABLE TO CONVEY THE IMPORTANT PART OF A QUESTION TO THE PRESIDENT QUITE AS CLEARLY. OF COURSE, THE INTERPRETER WOULD STILL TRANSLATE THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE, WHETHER CONSECUTIVELY OR SIMULTANEOUSLY.

11. THE QUESTION OF A MODERATOR:

BERLIN SENAT PRESS SPOKESMAN PETER SOETJE, WHO IS CHARGED WITH ORGANIZING THE TOWN MEETING ON THE GERMAN SIDE, HAS RECOMMENDED THAT THE MEETING HAVE A MODERATOR FLUENT IN BOTH ENGLISH AND GERMAN WHO IS ALSO INDEPENDENTLY KNOWN AND RESPECTED IN BERLIN. MAYOR STOBBE IS ALSO IN FAVOR OF THIS IDEA. TWO BERLINERS FIT THE REQUIREMENTS OF FLUENCY IN BOTH LANGUAGES, PUBLIC PRESENCE, AND PUBLIC RESPECT. ONE IS PETER PECHEL, A FLUENT ENGLISH SPEAKER WITH YEARS OF RESIDENCE IN THE U.S. WHOSE TV STATION HAS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR COVERAGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. THE OTHER IS EQUALLY FLUENT ENGLISH-SPEAKING JUERGEN GRAF, A TV PERSONALITY OF THE US STATION RIAS, ALSO CHARGED WITH COVERING VISIT FOR MEDIA. WE FIND THE IDEA OF SUCH A MODERATOR A HELPFUL ONE, PARTICULARLY IN THE MATTER OF BALANCING THE INTERESTS OF SPONTANEITY WITH SOME SELECTION OF QUESTIONS.

12. INTERPRETING:

EITHER SIMULTANEOUS OR CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING FOR THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AND ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IS POSSIBLE. THE ADVANTAGE OF SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING IS THAT IT SAVES TIME. THE DISADVANTAGE IS THAT, IF NORMAL CONFERENCE INTERPRETERS ARE USED, ONE DOES NOT HAVE FULL CONTROL OVER PRODUCT OR ITS QUALITY, AND THE INTERPRETING IS "ANONYMOUS". THE ADVANTAGES OF CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING ARE THAT, GIVEN A TOP PROFESSIONAL, THERE IS QUALITY CONTROL PLUS A PERSONAL DIMENSION THAT COMES FROM HEARING THE PRINCIPAL'S REMARKS IN ENGLISH, AS WELL AS IN AN AUTHORITATIVE CONSECUTIVE
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RENDITION. CONSECUTIVE ALSO PROVIDES A PAUSE BETWEEN ANSWERS OR EVEN BETWEEN SENTENCES IF ONE WISHES, BUT ADDS DELAY AND REDUCES

THE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS THAT COULD BE ANSWERED.

13. THE KONGRESSHALLE IS WELL EQUIPPED TO HANDLE ANY TYPE OF INTERPRETING, AND HAS EARPHONES AT EACH SEAT FOR SIMULTANEOUS. IT IS TECHNICALLY EQUIPPED TO PERMIT TV STATIONS TO CHOOSE WHETHER THEY TRACK THE ORIGINAL, THE TRANSLATION, OR FADE ONE INTO THE OTHER, PERMITTING FLEXIBILITY FOR US AND GERMAN NETWORKS TO ADJUST TO THEIR AUDIENCES.

14. WE BELIEVE EITHER CONSECUTIVE OR SIMULTANEOUS WOULD BE WELL RECEIVED BY BERLINERS FOR THE REASONS ABOVE. ON BALANCE, OUR SUGGESTION WOULD BE TO HAVE THE PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS INTERPRETED SIMULTANEOUSLY, BASED ON A TEXT PROVIDED THE INTERPRETER IN ADVANCE. WE SUGGEST THAT HIS ANSWERS TO LIVE QUESTIONS BE TRANSLATED EITHER CONSECUTIVELY, OR SIMULTANEOUSLY AS HE GIVES THEM. THIS WOULD ASSURE THE QUALITY AND CONSISTENCY OF AN AUTHORITATIVE RENDITION, PLUS THE TYPE OF PERSONAL COORDINATION AND FEEDBACK BETWEEN PRINCIPAL AND MODERATOR/INTERPRETER DESIRABLE FOR SUCH A SPONTANEOUS OCCASION. IF SIMULTANEOUS WERE PREFERRED, THE PRESIDENTIAL INTERPRETER COULD PERFORM IT FROM THE STAGE, POSSIBLY FROM WITH A HAND MIKE OR AT A DESK SOME FEET FROM THE PRESIDENT.

15. WE WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON'S COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE MODALITIES TO FACILITATE FURTHER PLANNING AND COORDINATION WITH BERLIN OFFICIALS.

16. THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH EMBASSY BONN. GEORGE

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